

SUBJECT: Washington, D.C., Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures

NEW MATERIAL: The notice is being issued to provide instructions and information to USAID/W employees on emergency dismissal or closure procedures for adverse weather conditions, power failures, possible Year 2000 (Y2K) work disruptions, and other emergency situations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 14, 1999

POLICY

USAID/General Notice
M/HR/PPIM/PP
12/14/1999

SUBJECT: Washington, D.C., Emergency Dismissal or Closure Procedures

The notice is being issued to provide instructions and information to USAID/W employees on emergency dismissal or closure procedures for adverse weather conditions, power failures, possible Year 2000 (Y2K) work disruptions, and other emergency situations. While these procedures do not apply to the field, Mission Directors are advised to prepare for such contingencies and to develop appropriate emergency dismissal and closure procedures in coordination with the embassy.

The following emergency procedures are in accordance with guidelines issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. These procedures apply in situations that prevent significant numbers of employees in the Washington, D.C., area from reporting to work on time or which require agencies to close all or part of their activities. These procedures do not apply to an Agency shutdown due to a lapse in appropriations.

1. Emergency Procedures

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will notify the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Human Resources (DAA/M/HR) of an emergency dismissal or closure decision. In the event of an emergency dismissal during normal work hours, employees will be informed by their respective Administrative Management Staff (AMS) as soon as they receive official notification from M/HR. When OPM makes a decision before employees report to work, the local media will be notified.

a. Emergencies During Normal Work Hours

When an emergency situation occurs during normal work hours, OPM may announce that the Federal Government is operating under an "adjusted work dismissal" policy. In the event of such an emergency, OPM will notify the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Human Resources (DAA/M/HR) of an emergency dismissal during the workday. Employees will be informed by their respective Administrative Management Staff (AMS) as soon as they receive official notification from the Office of Human Resources (M/HR).

When employees receive notification of an emergency dismissal during normal work hours, employees will be dismissed relative to their normal departure times from work. For example, if a three-hour adjusted work dismissal policy is announced, employees who normally leave their offices at 5:00 p.m. would be authorized to leave at 2:00 p.m.

The following examples explain how leave is handled when an "adjusted work dismissal policy" is announced.

(1) Employee is on duty.

Supervisor grants excused absence for the remainder of the workday following the employee's authorized time of dismissal even if the employee is scheduled to take leave later in the day.

(2) Employee leaves before official word of the "adjusted work dismissal" policy is received.

Supervisor charges absence without leave (AWOL) or permits the employee to request leave, as appropriate, for the remainder of the workday.

(3) Employee leaves before the time set for his or her authorized dismissal with supervisory approval.

Supervisor permits the employee to request leave for the period remaining before the employee's time of dismissal and grants excused absence for the remainder of the workday following the employee's time of dismissal even if the employee is scheduled to take leave later in the workday.

(4) Employee is scheduled to return from leave after the announcement of an "adjusted work dismissal" policy is made but before his or her time of dismissal.

When an employee is scheduled to report for work before the authorized dismissal time, but fails to do so, the supervisor may require the employee to return to work, approve leave or charge AWOL (absence without leave) for the entire workday. Excused absence may be granted to employees who are scheduled to report for work after an adjusted work dismissal policy is officially announced. Excused absence is appropriate for the remainder of the workday even if an employee is scheduled to take leave later in the day.

(5) Employee is absent on previously approved leave (annual, sick, or leave without pay) for the entire workday.

Supervisor continues to charge the employee leave for the entire workday.

(6) Employee fails to report for work before the employee's authorized dismissal time.

Supervisor may charge AWOL or permit the employee to request annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP, as appropriate, for the entire workday.

Supervisors are advised to exempt individual employees from authorized dismissal times under these procedures only to avoid hardships (e.g., when younger children are released early from school and no alternative forms of childcare are available to the employee). When individual employees are exempted from authorized dismissal times, no leave should be charged to the employee.

b. Emergencies Before the Workday Begins

OPM will provide one of the following five announcements to the media when an emergency occurs before the workday begins. OPM determinations will be announced by the media as follows:

(1) THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS OPEN; EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO REPORT FOR WORK ON TIME.

This announcement means that Federal agencies will open on time, and employees are expected to report for work as scheduled. If employees are unavoidably delayed in arriving for work, supervisors may grant a reasonable amount of excused absence, normally not to exceed two hours, for nonemergency employees taking into account such factors as distance, availability and mode of transportation. Supervisors should be as flexible as possible in approving annual leave or LWOP for employees who face emergency situations or other hardships (e.g., when schools/child care centers open late or are closed).

(2) FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE OPERATING UNDER AN UNSCHEDULED LEAVE POLICY. EMPLOYEES MAY TAKE LEAVE WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.

This announcement means that Federal agencies will open on time, but employees not designated as "emergency employees" may take annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) without the prior approval of their supervisors. "Emergency employees" are expected to report for work on time. Employees must inform their supervisors if they

plan to take annual leave or LWOP. Accrued compensatory time may be used instead of annual leave or LWOP if requested by the employee.

Sick leave may not be authorized unless an employee is ill or for family care or bereavement purposes.

(3) FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE OPERATING UNDER AN ADJUSTED HOME DEPARTURE POLICY. EMPLOYEES ARE REQUESTED TO LEAVE HOME ## HOURS LATER THAN THEIR NORMAL DEPARTURE TIME.

This announcement means that Federal agencies will open on time, but employees not designated as emergency employees should adjust their normal home departure time consistent with the announcement, and those who arrive late will be excused without loss of pay or charge to leave. For example, if an employee normally leaves for work at 7:00 a.m. and is directed to delay departure for 2 hours, the employee would delay his/her normal departure until 9:00 a.m. The employee would be granted excused absence from the time the employee normally arrives at work until the time the employee actually arrives at work. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

(4) FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE OPERATING UNDER AN ADJUSTED HOME DEPARTURE/UNSCHEDULED LEAVE POLICY. EMPLOYEES ARE REQUESTED TO LEAVE HOME ## HOURS LATER THAN THEIR NORMAL DEPARTURE TIME, AND EMPLOYEES MAY TAKE LEAVE WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL.

This announcement means that Federal agencies will open on time, but employees not designated as emergency employees should adjust their normal home departure time consistent with the announcement. Those who arrive late will be excused without loss of pay or charge to leave, and those who are unable to come to work may take annual leave, LWOP, or accrued compensatory time off without the prior approval of their supervisors. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

(5) FEDERAL AGENCIES ARE CLOSED.

This announcement means that employees not designated as emergency employees are excused from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave. Emergency employees are expected to report for work on time.

Workdays on which a Federal activity is closed are nonworkdays for leave purposes. Because leave cannot be charged for nonworkdays,

employees who are on leave approved before the closure also must be granted excused absence. This does not apply to employees on LWOP, on military leave, on suspension, or in a nonpay status on the workday before and after the closure. These employees are not entitled to excused absence and should remain in their current status.

2. Office Coverage and Emergency Employees

OPM guidelines require agencies to designate "emergency employees."

These employees are expected to report for, or remain at, work in emergency situations, including emergency dismissals and closures (other than shutdown due to a lapse in appropriations, in which case other guidance will govern who is to report to and/or remain at work), unless they are instructed otherwise. USAID's emergency employees include the Agency Duty Officer and respective Bureau/Office duty officers, as designated weekly by A/AID-ES.

In addition, certain circumstances may necessitate that an Assistant Administrator or independent office head designate a limited number of employees as "emergency employees" to support a specific emergency action. For example, should an international disaster occur at a time when only emergency employees are required to report to work, the Assistant Administrator for BHR may designate that the staff or a task force which is assigned to support the disaster relief effort are "emergency employees" for the duration. Such a decision must be documented in writing and conveyed to the designated employees in writing.

In the event of possible Y2K work disruption, certain employees may be needed to support the Agency's business recovery efforts in an emergency situation. In addition, a limited number of employees may be necessary in an emergency situation to maintain the safe operations of the USAID/W physical plant and for other critical administrative operations. The Assistant Administrator for Management or the responsible independent office head will designate these employees as "emergency employees," and they will be notified in writing of this designation.

Supervisors are encouraged to post a copy of these guidelines in the office where employees may refer to them. These guidelines will also be posted on the Human Resources (M/HR) Website under "Leave Administration."

POINT OF CONTACT: For further information regarding this Notice, please contact Joann Jones, M/HR/PPIM/PP, on (202) 712-5048.

Notice 1231

ads17/iu4-12